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Group of countries in special situations: comprehensive 10-year Review Conference on the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action

Letter dated 4 September 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the fact that the report of the intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries on its first session (A/CONF.225/PC/5) does not contain a complete and precise reflection of the statement made by the delegate of Azerbaijan at the meeting of 12 June 2014. The full text of the statement is annexed to the present letter.

In this connection, I deem it necessary to refer to General Assembly resolution 68/225 entitled "Specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation" and, in particular, to its paragraph 6, in which the Assembly reaffirmed its full commitment to urgently address the special development needs of and the challenges faced by landlocked developing countries through the full, timely and effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, as contained in the declaration on the midterm review.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 22 (b).

(*Signed*) Yashar **Aliyev**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 4 September 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement made on 12 June 2014 by the delegate of Azerbaijan during the first session of the intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries

Azerbaijan emphasizes the importance of the Almaty Programme of Action in providing a valuable framework for addressing the special needs of landlocked developing countries, with a particular stress on developing transit potential and improving transport and communication routes, as well as facilitating border-crossing procedures. We would like to draw attention to an important transport infrastructure project, the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars new railway link, which is being realized together with Georgia and Turkey. This project will provide railway connection linking trans-European and trans-Asian railway networks.

It is worth mentioning the ongoing construction of the new Baku Sea Trade Port Complex, a main marine gateway situated at the intersection of east-west and north-south transport corridors.

We would also like to inform you about the trans-Anatolian gas pipeline and trans-Adriatic pipeline projects as strategic midstream components of the southern gas corridor. Special emphasis is laid on gradual and substantial increase of Azerbaijan's input and share in the European energy market. In addition, we wish to outline the significance of information and communication technologies in enabling socioeconomic development in developing countries. In this regard, my country distinguishes the transnational-Eurasian information super highway, which will serve as a major element of the east-west transport corridor and facilitate the supply of the countries of the region with information and communications technology services.

It is imperative to stress that, along with constraints deriving from the landlocked location, the occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan, namely the Nagorno Karabakh region and other seven adjacent districts, by Armenia remains one of the main obstacles hindering the full use and development of transport routes and communications within the internationally recognized borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Underscoring the significance of the Generalized System of Preferences extended to landlocked developing countries, we note that, owing to its classification as an "upper-middle income" country for the last three years, Azerbaijan has not qualified to benefit from preferential treatment by the European Union and Canada since February 2014. This situation has a negative impact on economic diversification as well as on the country's non-oil export promotion efforts. The reconsideration of this decision is deemed desirable.